

Digitising workflow: prepress benefits

AS it celebrates its 50th anniversary, AV Flexologic is steadfastly dedicated to empowering flexographic print service providers (PSPs) to harness the full potential of Industry 4.0.

'We believe in the possibility of preventing prepress department-related downtime while enhancing overall efficiency and productivity levels,' says area manager Ashley Clark. 'The vision entails digitalising traditional workflows, continuously improving existing equipment with advanced technology and innovating new equipment.'

Ensuring optimal workflow efficiency, Ashley explains that AV Flexologic offers comprehensive equipment for every step of the process. 'Our workflow starts with retrieving the sleeves from our optimised vertical Sleeve Storage System,' he remarks. 'These sleeves are then transported using our Tech Cart® for automatic tape application with the RoboTAPE device or manual application on the moulder, utilising the cutting knife and tape holder. The mounting process is streamlined and precise,

with AV Flexologic's SAMM 2.0 semi-automatic or FAMM 2.0 fully-automatic moulder achieving unmatched accuracy (5µm microns) swiftly and consistently.

Ashley adds that after the expected high-quality printing has been achieved, the tape and plates can be efficiently and carefully demounted on a Demounter to prevent any damage. The workflow ends when the sleeves are safely stored back on the customised Sleeve Storage System.

'PSPs can also build up a record of the exact condition of each sleeve in stock as well as predict the necessary pressure required in the press to get the best quality and reduce the need for any adjustments during the set-up process by using the TIR measurement system, which creates a complete 3D landscape of each sleeve,' he reports.

Ed's note: AV Flexologic is represented and distributed by Ipex Machinery in Southern Africa.

Bridging the solvent use gap

WHILE discussions about migrating from solvent to water-wash or thermal plate making technology have been ongoing, plate suppliers have yet to introduce a 'bridging technology' to help reduce solvent consumption for the existing 70% installed solvent wash equipment.

This fact motivated Asahi Photoproducts to develop new plate chemistry, which can be washed with approximately 30% less solvent and half the total energy consumption compared to traditional solvent wash plate processing.

'Additionally, Asahi's AFPTM-R reduced solvent flexo plates enable print service providers to increase the number of plates produced in an hour as the process requires significantly less drying time,' enthuses Dr Dieter Niederstadt, European technical

marketing manager. 'Furthermore, there's less swelling of the plate during processing, increasing print quality.'

Tami Warlop, graphics manager at Excelsior Marking, a North American-based customer, concurs: 'With these plates, our plate turnaround time is between 60 and 85 minutes faster and we're using much less solvent. The washout and drying times are cut in half compared to other materials we use. The standout feature of the AFPTM-R plates is consistency. We seldom have to adjust the relief settings from one box to another, resulting in substantial time savings.'

Ed's note: Asahi Photoproducts is represented in Southern Africa by HEIDELBERG Southern Africa.

AV Flexologic
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50th
Anniversary

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